As I write this, the current editorial team for *Public Administration Review* is entering its sixth month of operation. Administrative operations for the journal have changed dramatically since our editorial team assumed responsibility for *PAR* on July 1, 2011. The learning curve for all of us has been precipitous, and I now truly appreciate the tireless work of my predecessor, Jos Raadschelders. We are all learning, and learning quickly, how to manage an extraordinary journal.

*PAR* now uses the Editorial Manager software to manage manuscript submission and the peer review process. Editorial Manager enables consistent tracking of manuscripts, authors, and reviewers. Among other features, the software generates customizable letters to authors and reviewers, automated reminders to reviewers, and reports on editors’ decisions and reviewers’ activities. The system can be accessed at http://www.editorialmanager.com/par/. Guidelines for submissions can be found at the publisher’s Web site, Wiley Online (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN%291540-6210). I ask that you follow these guidelines carefully to ensure timely processing of your paper.

The primary operational goal of *PAR* is to minimize the elapsed time between an initial manuscript submission, an editorial decision, and, if the paper is accepted, publication. Thus far, with few exceptions, the editorial team has been able to provide an initial editorial decision to authors quickly. The first step in providing timely service to our authors is to begin processing the paper as soon as possible after submission. Within just a few business days after submission, and in many cases just a few hours, reviewers are selected and invited. When we began in July, we took responsibility for 85 manuscripts in the review pipeline. Since July 1, *PAR* has been receiving, on average, 40 manuscripts per month through Editorial Manager (approximately 500 per year!). The average time to an initial editorial decision is less than 27 days, including those papers that were rejected without review. The average time to an “accept” or “revise” decision is approximately 45 days when we include only those papers sent out for review. We plan to continue the short cycle from submission to editorial decision as a service to authors and readers. The most significant factor in making a timely editorial decision is how long it takes for a reviewer to complete the review. In messages sent to reviewers soliciting their input, reviewers are asked to complete the review within 30 days. Editorial Manager sends automated reminders, which improves reviewer response time. However, *PAR*’s customer service is only as good as the timeliness of the reviewers; keeping the commitment to review a paper in 30 days is important for our authors.

Our process for selecting reviewers is meticulous, but we are not infallible. We have established rules to assist us in selection. Because of their familiarity with related literature, we select reviewers who are content area experts. These reviewers are best suited to evaluate a manuscript’s potential contribution to the field. We also strive to make sure some, if not all, of the reviewers are methodological experts in the research methods used. This is especially important for manuscripts that employ advanced or uncommon methodologies. If the authors seek to make an argument about more general concepts (e.g., management, leadership, motivation), at least one reviewer is recruited from outside of the traditional public management/administration professional field. By helping reduce silos between academic disciplines, this practice promotes cross-disciplinary thought. Additionally, when it is relevant, we incorporate practitioners at the latter stages of the review process as a means to help authors consider the applicability of their findings to practice.

*PAR*’s acceptance rate from July to December 2011 is about 10 percent. Approximately 40 percent of the manuscripts submitted have been rejected without being sent to reviewers, which is in line with the norm across many journals. These “desk rejects” include manuscripts that are missing key components of a polished paper or that were determined to be inappropriate for *PAR*. The primary reasons for not sending a manuscript out to reviewers are that the paper does not advance our knowledge of public administration and/or does not provide an opportunity for scholars and practitioners to build on and broaden their existing frameworks and perspectives. Thus, our final decisions often come down to considerations such as the fit of the manuscript with *PAR*’s readership and...
editorial breadth, as well as the low prospect that the manuscript will proceed to publication in *PAR*.

We ask authors to take great care in preparing a manuscript for submission. The blind peer review process will not be used for submissions that appear to be rough drafts or poorly written papers. Indeed, peer review should occur before a paper is submitted; allowing a colleague or two to look over the paper before submission is encouraged and expected. *PAR*s reviewers spend a great deal of time preparing reviews of papers, and we do not wish to burden them with a paper that is too far away from publication to warrant consideration.

The new editorial team has initiated the use of Early View, which allows finalized articles to be published online before print publication. Early View enables us to move a paper from final acceptance to online publication in 60 days or less. These articles can be viewed on Wiley Online (http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1540-6210).

Please send your very best work to *PAR*. Our team will take it from there. We pledge to do our best to ensure a timely review and publication online and in print.

—Michael McGuire, Managing Editor